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ABSTRACT

Focusing on Chicago (Illinois), this report describes the magnitude of issues related to the education of non-English-speaking immigrants, and presents an overview of both the learning resource materials available to support bilingual education in the Chicago School System and the availability of materials in foreign languages in the Chicago Public Library. The premise being explored is that perhaps the school system is not adequately supporting bilingual programs and that the subsequent burden is falling on the public library. The overview of the school system includes a table summarizing the number of transitional bilingual programs--which are designed to provide students with the opportunity to learn in their native languages and at their own level of cognitive skill to prevent them from lagging in school performance while learning English--in each of 18 language groups at the high school and K-8 levels in the Chicago area. The addresses and telephone numbers of four multilingual education resource and information centers are also provided. Following the overview is an analysis of federal grant proposals (Library Services Reconstruction Act--LSCA) submitted by the Chicago Public Library over a 3-year period dealing with bilingual and multilingual programs. Finally, this study identifies some of the policy questions that face school, academic, and public libraries confronted with the challenge of serving disparate populations of patrons. (12 references) (SD)

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# PROBLEMS OF THE 1980 S:THE NEW INFLUX OF IMMIGRANTS: POLICY QUESTIONS FOR THE 1990'S.

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Bryne Memorial Library

St. Xavier College

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

## ABSTRACT

Focusing on the City of Chicago, this paper describes the magnitude of the immigrant problem, presents an overview of both the learning resource materials available to support bilingual education in the Chicago School System and the availability of materials in foreign languages in the Chicago Public Library. Following the overview is an analysis of the federal grant (LSCA) proposals submitted by the Chicago public Library over the past three years dealing with bilingual or multilingual programs. Finally, this paper attempts to identify some of the policy questions which face libraries (school, academic and public) confronted with the challenge of serving disparate populations of patrons.

The premise being explored in this paper is that perhaps the school system is not adequately supporting bilingual programs and that the subsequent burden is falling on the public library.

## THE BILINGUAL ISSUE

To be American, for many of us is to " talk" American, i.e..

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English.

The popular view of acculturation into the American way of life seems to require a rejection of old ways, old values, and "old" languages.

The problem of bilingualism is not a new one. Benjamin Franklin wrote in a letter to Peter Collinson in 1751,"
...but now they come in droves and carry all before them, ...few of their children learn English, they import many books from Germany,...signs in our streets have inscriptions in both languages and in some places only in German...yet I am not for refusing entirely to admit them into our Colonies: all that seems to be necessary is, ...establish English schools."(Franklin, 1751/1971)

Current immigration has not been limited to the large urban areas. The (Denver Colorado)Rocky Mountain News carried a story describing students at the Lawrence Elementary School in Arvada Colorado. Twenty percent of the students were from non English speaking families. The article went on to say that 3% of the school age children had only limited English proficiency, statewide. Ninety one languages were spoken in the 68 Colorado school districts.

In Casper Wyoming, the Star-Tribune described English classes teaching "survival" skills to a population 85% Hispanic, and with lesser Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, Chinese, Belgian,and

Iranian representation. The Minneapolis (Minn.) Star and Tribune, described the growing number of Japanese Saturday Schools. In Boise, Idaho, children are learning Chinese in Saturday Schools.

All across the country, non- English speaking students are affecting the local public school systems. Pedagogical arguments over the pros and cons of bilingual education continue.

Prior to 1985, the ILLINOIS School Code (Chapter 122 Article 14C) required that any district with twenty or more students of limited English speaking ability within an attendance center, should provide a transitional bilingual education program. The school reform legislation of 1985 (SB730) added the requirement that districts that enroll fewer than twenty children must provide a locally determined transitional program of instruction.

Bilingual education provides Limited English Proficiency (LEP) children with the opportunity to learn in their native (home) languages and at the their own level of cognitive skill. This method was intended to prevent students from lagging in school performance while learning English language skills.

One of the major improvements of the reform legislation is that it allows school districts a much greater role in determining how to best satisfy the educational needs of their own LEP students. Individual student needs combined with local school personnel and parents determine the appropriateness of instructional services.

The use of the native language is not intended to perpetuate the native language nor to enhance the student s proficiency in that language, but rather is merely to be a tool to promote the learning of English and the development of content area skills. (Perlman 1988).

According to the 1988 Bilingual Census required by the State of Illinois, 21,511 limited English proficient (LEP) students were in school districts outside Chicago. Of those, approximately 9,580 were enrolled in state-funded transitional bilingual education (TBE) programs. The 11,931 remaining should have been served in transitional programs of instruction (TPI) but only 2,500 were actually enrolled in state funded programs.

For the 1988-1989 school year, 26,235 students in Chicago were enrolled in TBE programs at the K-8 level and 3,412 students in TBE programs in the Chicago public high schools. The total number of students enrolled in K-12 TBE programs in Chicago is 29,647. Those Transitional bilingual Programs were offered in the following languages:

| Language | High School | K - 8 |
|---|---|---|
| Arabic | 1 program | 10 programs |
| Assyrian | 1 | 10 |
| Cambodian Khmer | 2 | 9 |
| Chinese | 3 | 6 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Greek | 0 | 5 |
| Gujarati | 0 | 3 |
| Haitian Creole | 1 | 2 |
| Hindi | 0 | 2 |
| Italian | 0 | 2 |
| Korean | 3 | 11 |
| Laotian | 0 | 2 |
| Polish | 4 | 5 |
| Romanian | 0 | 3 |
| Russian | 0 | 1 |
| Spanish | 21 | 171 |
| Serbo Croatian | 0 | 1 |
| Urdu | 0 | 5 |
| Vietnamese | 2 | 8 |

**Total number of programs: High School:38 K-8: 256**

**Total number of language groups: 18**

***Note: TBE classes have twenty or more students in each class.**

Many schools in Chicago have fewer than twenty students from a particular language group in attendance. So the Chicago Board of Education also provided TPI programs to 3,292 LEP students from 13 language groups. There are a total of 142 identified language groups spoken by children in the Chicago Public Schools (Appendix A).

Since early childhood education is important, particularly in low income families, the Chicago public schools provide bilingual early childhood education programs to 1,320 pre-schoolers in 33 programs. The total enrollment of limited English speaking students in all programs in Chicago is 34,260.

Bilingual education programs in the Chicago Public Schools are funded through a combination of local, state, and federal monies. Over two thirds of the bilingual teachers are locally funded. Local support for the bilingual programs is based on a quota system which considers the number of limited English proficiency students served. State appropriations are also designated on the basis of number of LEP students served. The Chicago Public Schools' Department of Research and Evaluation annually conducts a census of LEP students.

The Illinois State Board of Education also requires that a census of LEP students be taken annually. The census is taken for each school in the Chicago Public School System as of February 1.

## BILINGUAL LEARNING RESOURCES

The Chicago Public School System provides special resources for bilingual education teachers, teachers aides, and school-community representatives. These resources are provided through instructional materials centers, in-service training, and after school enrichment experiences. The Chicago Board of

Education provides four conveniently located Multilingual Education Resource and Information Centers (MERIC).

MERIC CENTER LOCATIONS

Meric- Asian
John C. Haines Elementary School
247 West 23rd Pl. 60616 Tel.#(312) 225-4652
(Hrs.8:30am-3:30pm)

Meric-Central
Administration and Service Center
1819 West Pershing Road 4th Fl.Center Tel.#(312)890-8008
(Hrs. 8:00am - 5:00pm)

Meric -North
Jose deDiego Community Academy
1313 North Claremont Avenue 60622 Tel.#(312)235-4355
(Hrs. 8:00 am - 4:00pm)

Meric - South
Maria Saucedo Magnet School
2850 West 24th St. Blvd. 60623 Tel.#(312)762-7660
(Hrs.8:00am - 4:00 pm)

These centers acquire, adapt, evaluate, and demonstrate commercially produced instruction materials that help advance

multicultural and multilingual learning. Staff hold in-services and practicums in which classroom teachers develop student learning reinforcement packets in various languages and content areas. The Meric centers are open for use by TBE, ESL and other teachers of Limited-English-Proficient students, as well as by student teachers, school administrators, parents, university and college students and members of community organizations.

Instructional materials cover a wide range of content areas. The formats for these materials are not limited to books, they also include duplicator masters, films, filmstrips, games, lesson plans, maps, computer software, multimedia kits, photos, posters, records cassettes, realia, teaching guides and transparencies.

Each MERIC Center has a special area in which it collects:

North- Assyrian, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Polish, Romanian,Russian, Spanish and Urdu.

South- Arabic, Haitian-Creole,Spanish and materials for early childhood bilingual programs.

Asian-Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Laotian, and Vietnamese

Central- ESL, multicultural education and Spanish language arts.

Additional teacher support is available through the Department of Multilingual Education in the Chicago Board of Education. The Foreign Student Services unit offers assistance in evaluating

foreign transcripts and provides information on foreign educational systems, U.S.Immigration and Naturalization Service regulations, and maintains files on accredited and non-accredited public and private schools across the country.
The Translation Services unit of the department provides language translations of school related documents and informational brochures for parents as well as for the community at large.

There are two other resource centers which serve Illinois schools located in the Chicago area. One is state funded; the other center is funded through federal Title VII funds.

The Illinois Resource Center is located in Des Plaines,Illinois. The Director is Mr. Ron Perlman. The IRC was established in 1972 to provide technical assistance and instructional support to teachers serving LEP students in Illinois. It is funded mainly by the Illinois State Board of Education but receives additional funding through contracted services with other agencies. It has become a statewide intermediate service agency. While it primarily serves the school districts outside of the city limits Chicago, many Chicago teachers do make use of its services.

The IRC provides consultative assistance ranging from on-site classroom visits to district wide workshops, training and professional development through regional workshops, conferences, and extended coursework with optional graduate credit through the National College of Education or Western Illinois University. The

IRC has instructional resources including a more than 21,000 volume collection of materials which can be loaned. IRC publishes a quarterly newsletter, The Linguathon' and handbooks for educators.

The Director, Ron Perlman, told me that he felt that it was vitally important for parents to be literate in their native language and to read in that language to their children. This early childhood experience, he claims, brings children into the school system with a language skill at a cognitive level where they can then learn English more readily. Parental participation and literacy are extremely important according to Perlman.

During an interview, Lyda Enriquez, the bilingual consultant for the Illinois State Board of Education said that in the state funding formula for bilingual education there are monies allotted for instructional materials but there is no line item for them in the budget. Mr. Xavier Botana, who was also present during the interview, outlined his activities as the Title VII Coordinator. Apparently, the Chicago School System operates totally apart from the rest of the State of Illinois. Mr. Botana holds training sessions for proposal writing and submission, fields questions and advises on implementation for the entire state excluding Chicago. The Chicago Board of Education doesn't notify him that they are submitting funding proposals. Mr. Botana finds out what funding they have received from a list he is sent by the U.S. Department of Education. He said that excellent Title VII

programs are in place in Palatine, Elgin and Urbana, Illinois.

The official name for the Title VII resource center is The Midwest Bilingual Education Multifunctional Resource Center. It is located in DesPlaines, Illinois. The Director is Minerva Coyne. The Center is one of 16 Regional Multifunctional Resource Centers funded by the U.S. Department of Education.It serves the area which includes Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, and Missouri.

The purpose of the Center is to assist state education agencies and school districts within its region to increase their ability to provide equal educational opportunities for LEP students. Each of the sixteen Centers has its own focus of interest. This one (Area 5) has as its focus, literacy for LEP secondary students. Many of the students coming into the high schools have been in refugee camps and haven't been in regular school for years. Literacy in their home language as well as in English is a very real problem.

The five consultants on the Center s staff also teach the cultures of various ethnic groups to outside classes. There is also an Evaluation Assistance Center at Georgetown University where program directors can request testing and evaluation instruments for bilingual programs.

There appears to be ample bilingual learning resource materials and services available to the teachers in the Chicago Public Schools. There is some question as to whether those resources are publicized enough. Perhaps the Department of Multilingual Education could make such information known to all those who are involved in teacher education in the State; as well as develop a more extensive internal information system.

## THE CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY

A survey of the Federal Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) Title I grant proposals submitted by the Chicago Public Library System over the past three years reveals a growing number of proposals which deal with bilingual or multilingual programs. One of the purposes of this study was to determine whether the reason for this increasing volume of bilingual proposals was due to lack of adequate support from the public school system. In this writer's opinion, that does not appear to be true. The proposals seem to augment the work being done in the schools.

The Director of Multi-type Library Development for the Chicago Public Library System, Eva Brown, said that one of the problems in dealing with foreign language populations for the public library was that the populations were so extremely mobile. She gave an example where there had been an influx of Russian immigrants into an area creating a demand for appropriate language materials. In little more than three years the

immigrants had almost totally disappeared from that area and the books were no longer relevant to the population moving into the area. This same scenario occurs in other parts of the state. What does a local public library do with foreign language materials which are no longer relevant to the patrons the library serves?

Over the years the Chicago Public Library (CPL) has been serving this growing and disparate clientele. They are to be commended! The challenge to administration and staff must be tremendous.

A reading of the Federal LSCA proposals for the past three years (1986-1989) yielded the following information. In 1986, CPL received funding for a project titled:
Pre-ESL: Literacy in Spanish as a 1st Step. According to the proposal half of the Spanish speaking adults in Chicago (est. total 422,063) are illiterate in their native language and therefore are cut off from ESL and General Education development classes geared to mainstreaming immigrants.

In 1987, the Chicago Public Library received a grant to catalog 3,000 books donated by the Mexican Consulate and earmarked for the Pilsen Branch Library. 44% of the titles were **unique** titles **not** held in **any** Illinois library. The CPL staff is capable of cataloging materials in over sixty languages.

There were five other grant proposals dealing with foreign language projects submitted in 1987. Only three of those were

funded:

1. Libro Means Book. A proposal to expand bilingual learning in the formative years by introducing preschool through third grade children to the library through story hours and class visits. The Logan Square Branch Library 3255 W. Altgeld was the grantee. The seven Chicago Public Schools participated.The library also sponsored orientations and ESL classes for the parents to improve parental awareness of their role in their childrens' learning.
2.Serving the Community Through Its Organizations was initiated by the Sulzer Branch Library, 4455 N. Lincoln. This project created a community organization directory. Nine other branch libraries joined in the project with the Sulzer Branch. The directory was to provide a link between the individual with a need to a service or source of information to fill that need. 415,993 people resided in the area served by the libraries. More than eighty language groups were represented by the area. Three hundred and thirty one organizations were identified and listed in the directory.
3.Spanish Communication Skills for Library Personnel. Initiated by the Main Library,to improve the ability of the library staff to communicate in Spanish. Of the 83 branch and regional libraries that make up the Chicago Public Library System, 29 (35%) have significant Hispanic populations in their service area.

1988 saw several LSCA Grants funded for the Chicago Public

Library. Many more went unfunded. Those that received monies were:

1. Enhancing Cultural Literacy, submitted by the Sulzer Regional Library proposed to enhance its ethnic children s collection in fiction and nonfiction, including materials in foreign languages in order to improve cultural literacy and promote international understanding.

2.Conserving Chinese Culture and History in the Midwest submitted by the Chinatown Branch Library-2314 Wentworth. This grant proposal was complicated and multi-faceted:*Oral History..12 interviews were video taped with politicians, Chinese businessmen and women, community and civic leaders as well as academicians. Eight more interviews are being planned.*An Archive..a community based archive related to the Chinese experience in the Midwest. *A Special Collection..books on Chinese heritage.*Lecture Series and Bibliographic Services.

3.Metropolitan Library Systems Cooperative Foreign Language Cataloging Project. Main Library. Foreign language cataloging presents special problems to local librarians. The Cataloging Division of CPL established a clearing house for foreign language cataloging. The purpose was to identify librarians with specific language skills who would provide descriptive cataloging and subject analysis for foreign language titles owned by libraries in the entire Chicago Metropolitan Area.

4.The Year of the New Reader:Reaching Out to the Foreign Born. This grant proposal involved four branch libraries and four different foreign languages. The languages were Korean, Arabic,

Spanish and Vietnamese. The project promoted library services multilingually. It consisted of ethnic folk tales story telling, parenting skills workshops, and homework help. At the Albany Park Branch 53 fourth through eighth graders met in the After School Homework Help Center and four native Korean teachers tutored in English, Social. Studies, math and Science.

The LSCA proposals funded for 1989 are:

1.Chinese Programs and Collections, through the Bezazian Branch Library, located in "new Chinatown". This branch serves not only the north and northwest sides of Chicago but also the Chinese reading materials needs of the suburbs of Evanston, Skokie, Wilmette, Lincolnwood, Northbrook, Morton Grove, Niles, Schaumburg, DesPlaines, Winnetka, Mount Prospect, LaGrange, Naperville, and Libertyville. There is a tremendous need for resources and services. Programs funded by this grant will make available information in Chinese and/or English on cassettes and booklets to be distributed to public libraries throughout the city and suburbs. The Chinese collections will be handled by three staff members who can read Chinese, and a holding list will be developed with brief annotations in Chinese and/or English for interlibrary loan purposes.

2. Serving the Hispanic Reader.This project provides the mechanisms to increase the quality of library service to the increasing city of Chicago's Hispanic population by establishing the Spanish Information Service and the Hispanic Services Office.The Spanish Information Service is a telephone information

and referral services staffed by Spanish speaking personnel and provides information on a variety of subjects. The Hispanic Services Office assists librarians in developing books, periodicals, and audiovisual materials collections relevant to the Spanish communities.

3. Preservation of South Asian Language Culture and Heritage. This project will link Chicago Public Library s foreign language section to four Asian neighborhood branches. This collaborative effort will purchase materials, develop programs and preserve the South Asian tradition in these communities.

It seems apparent that the Chicago Public Library System is doing all that it can to serve the needs of its diverse ethnic populations. The cooperative cataloging project, previously mentioned, also resulted in a booklet, Guide to Foreign Language Materials in Chicago Area Libraries, published by the Metropolitan Library Systems in Illinois. It is a guide to all the libraries in the Chicago metropolitan area with holdings in foreign language. One hundred and seventy-one languages are listed in the directory.

**POLICY ISSUES FOR THE 1990's**

**PROBLEM:** The growing number of disparate foreign language collections in Illinois Libraries is an issue that should be given careful consideration.

**POLICY ISSUE:** Should the Secretary of State and the State

Library consider coordinating the acquisition and lending of multilingual materials?

**PROBLEM:** As Colleges and Universities in Illinois reinstate the foreign language requirement for entering students, is it possible to have two way language programs? That is, to have both LEP and mainstream students in the same class each learning each other's language.

**POLICY ISSUE:** Educational policy promoting foreign language for mainstream English speaking students is in contradiction with the policy of decreasing bilingual students' use of their home language.

**PROBLEM:** There is some doubt as to whether current up-to-date resource materials reach the children in the classrooms of the Chicago Public Schools.

**POLICY ISSUE:** Who selects materials for the attendance center Learning Resource Center?(central office or personnel in the local center)

**POLICY ISSUE:** Do the collections in local attendance centers reflect the population of the school?

**POLICY ISSUE:** do the LEP children and their parents have access to literature and information in their home language as well as in English?

**POLICY ISSUE:** What are the credentials of the supervisor of the LRC at the local level? Is that person a librarian or a classroom teacher with a "free" period?

Some of the unanswered questions concerning learning resource materials in the elementary schools are related to the following facts: In 1987-1988 there were only 2,206 certified school librarians in Illinois schools. There were 509 librarians in K-8 schools, 301 in 9-12 and 1396 in Unit Districts (K-12). There are 998 School Districts in Illinois.

According to the Illinois Board of Education, there are only **nine** certified librarians in elementary schools in the second largest school district, Rockford: none in the Elgin School District and again none in the Peoria elementary schools (the 3rd and 4th largest districts). According to information obtained from the Chicago Public Library System, all the high schools had certified school librarians but few if any of the elementary schools did.

**POLICY ISSUE:** A School District would not put an uncertified teacher in the classroom but that doesn t hold true for the library or Learning Resource Center. How can complex selection acquisition and development issues be adequately and intelligently dealt with, without professional expertise?

**PROBLEM:** The steady flow of immigrants into Illinois is creating a need for multicultural and multilingual library staffs.
**POLICY ISSUE:** What are Illinois Graduate Library Schools doing to meet this need? Are they actively recruiting minority library school candidates? Do they offer any kind of multicultural

coursework?

**POLICY ISSUE:** Is the library profession locally, statewide, and nationally aware of the bilingual problem and is the profession prepared to take action so that the best use of materials and personnel can serve the widest populations?

Finally, the over-riding policy issue rising from the tide of immigrants is that of **literacy.** Economic stability and well being is dependent on having a literate workforce.

**POLICY ISSUE:** Are literacy classes the responsibility of private companies in the workplace, or are they the responsibility of schools and libraries?

## CONCLUSION

Amitai Etzioni was a featured speaker at the ALA Midwinter Conference. He was quoted in American Libraries as saying:

"Preservation of liberty does not lead us to 250 million individuals but to 250 million Americans, people who are together in communities, families, and associations, combining to protect each other and to discharge our moral commitments."

The issues of multilingual education and multicultural preservation are amazing. Few people are aware of what is happening in those areas. When this project began, it was expected that the study would find that neither the Chicago Public Schools nor the Chicago Public Library was really very

effective in dealing with their bilingual populations. As previously stated, the only fault that seemingly can be found with the Chicago Public School System s multilingual resources is that not enough people know about them. This study did not investigate the materials in the local school libraries, so that remains a questionable area.The Chicago Public Library's efforts to service its varied clientele is impressive. The dedicated people serving in the Branch Libraries who are welcoming and serving their ever changing foreign language populations should be commended. It is this writer s belief that the issue of polylingual patrons will soon be one that all libraries will have to deal with and the time to begin preparing for that issue is now.

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